chairman, to the effect that the new sewers of Hamburgh were *egg-shaped*: they were oval.

Mr. Poynter then read a paper on "Ornamental Leather Hangings," which was illustrated by a number of fine specimens contributed by Mr. Pratt. The reader ably traced the history of this material, shewing its use in Egypt at a very early period, and giving numerous instances of its occurrence in old buildings. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, after its use had been revived, it was very extensively employed. A fine leather was used, on which figures were either impressed, or merely painted. It was not certain that there was any manufactory of it in England: it was chiefly imported here from Belgium and France. Where it was first generally used in modern times was doubtful—some thought Spain, others Venice. It was, at all events, certain that at Venice, in the seventeenth century, the use of leather hangings was universal. The first step in the process of preparing the leather, after joining the skins, was to silver the whole surface: parts which were required to look like gold were varnished with coloured varnish. After being silvered, the leather was laid on blocks, on which the forms required had been cut, and passed through a press. The borders and more minutely decorated portions were executed with metal stamps, such as bookbinders used,—a more costly process. At Blenheim, in what was called the Titian Gallery, the paintings were executed on leather, and were, as every one knew, not by Titian. The reader described some fine examples existing in Rouen, also one that was exhibited, of which the subject was Antony and Cleopatra,—one of a series which formerly belonged to the celebrated Lord Clarendon. He trusted that when museums were formed illustrative of the arts of the middle ages, specimens of ornamental leather hangings would not be wanting.

Mr. Crace said, that in Paris they employed plaster moulds to give the impress to the leather, and used much flock to ornament the face of it.

The chairman, before adjourning the meeting, said it was his melancholy duty to allude to the loss of two members of the profession. The first was Mr. Kay, a member of the Institute, whom all there knew and respected, and with whom he had been intimately associated during the early steps for establishing the Institute. The second, Mr. Lonsdale Elmes, was not a member of the Institute, but, as a most promising architect, claimed their regret. The works he had executed in Liverpool reflected the greatest credit on him. Some time ago, when the prince consort was in Liverpool, he went over these buildings, and was so well satisfied with them, that he presented to Mr. Elmes a gold medal. A slight fall, it appeared, getting out of a carriage, was the immediate cause of Mr. Elmes' death, at the early age of thirty-two; but disease existed which would probably have carried him off.

A NEW PICTURE OF PART OF LONDON.

THE GOLDEN-LANE DISTRICT.

THE calamitous circumstances affecting the public health and welfare which have rendered legislation for the sanitary improvement of towns so urgent, to secure all classes that amount of health and comfort, without which other and higher bestowments too often fail to accomplish their purposes of amelioration, are too well attested by the irresistible evidence of facts, to break down under any weight of opposition, and must force their way to speedy triumph. For without the vantage ground of some such improvements in our social state as it is the object of sanitary reform to develop, religion and education will have to struggle with disadvantages calculated powerfully to obstruct, not to say defeat, their combined attempt to achieve the regeneration of society.

When it is considered how imposing a portion of the whole nation towns constitute, and with what rapidity they are increasing, such a fact as the following speaks trumpet-tongued. It appears that while one million of the inhabitants of large towns lose annually upwards of 27,000 of their number by death, the same number of the inhabitants of rural districts, suffer a loss of only 19,300; the loss on the part of the million of inhabitants of large towns exceeding that of their more favoured fellow-countrymen, by little less than 8,000.

In the rural districts the deaths are as 1 in 55; in towns as 1 in 38; the average in the two being 1 in 46. In Rutlandshire, to take a particular county, the average of human life is twice the duration of that of Manchester; and from this latter place regiments are twice recruited, for once from the rural districts: such is the broad distinction between the health of towns and the health of the country.

Many parts of the metropolis are in so dreadful a condition, seldom visited by those capable of inducing improvement, that a description of them would scarcely be believed.

The neighbourhood of Goswell-street (St. Luke's), Whitecross-street, Golden-lane, and Old-street, presenting labyrinths of courts and alleys without any drainage, affords an example of this, and we are glad to find that a local committee has been formed, through the endeavours of Mr. F. Moseley, for ameliorating the calamitous condition of the neighbourhood; and that a petition to the legislature, praying for a bill of health, is in course of signature.

After pointing out the way in which every inch of the ground has been covered, the petition shews "that, under such circumstances, the most hardy frame amongst the inhabitants became weak and a prey to ill health; fever and pestilence prevailed, and death made rapid strides, when a fresh source of enterprise was embarked in, though further prejudicial to the health of the district (the formation of graveyards), in the midst of a population whose understandings were not sufficiently informed to be able to appreciate the insidious agents of sickness and death in activity around them. Five of these graveyards are situated between Golden-lane and Whitecross-street, a space of six acres, and upon which 6,000 people are packed. Three out of the five of these graveyards thus commenced, being the speculation of undertakers.

That it is within the present century that this social revolution has been produced (this memento of disregard for fellow-man) by which 13,000 of their fellow creatures are now dragging out the days and nights of their existence in abodes barely fit for animals, without underground or surface drainage, any thorough draught of air (the entries to this labyrinth being by narrow archways, of which from Golden-lane alone there are thirty, and the multiplicity of courts which branch off being *cul-de-sac*), while the rooms generally have not been built more than 12 feet square, and each appropriated to a family in which they live, sleep, and many carry on trades."

"That with these sources of pestilence, there are as surely moral contaminations which alike radiate and diffuse their effects, sooner or later, over the metropolis. Long familiarity with all kinds of loathsome sights and stenches outside these miserable abodes, begets an indifference to cleanliness and neatness in the interior, which soon extends to their personal habits. Men and women crowded together in these courts and alleys, are thus withdrawn from observation and the influence of good example, and are neither shamed out of vice nor won over to the practice of virtue."

Is it to be wondered at that the clergy and more intelligent inhabitants of this miserable district are at last speaking out?

AWARDS OF OFFICIAL REFEREES.

OUTBUILDINGS AND FENCES.

MR. R. P. BROWNE, of Greenwich, laid information against Mr. Slous, of Lewisham-road, to the effect that the latter, without having given notice, had erected a shed building at the back of his house, composed wholly of wood, contrary to Schedule D, parts 1 and 2, of the Act.

At the hearing of the case, Mr. Slous admitted that the works had not been altered in pursuance of the notice within forty-eight hours from the date of it, but stated that he had subsequently *removed the slating of the roof*. It appeared from the statements of the parties that the erection in question was inclosed at the back and sides by wooden party fences, which Mr. Slous had raised with weather boarding to the further height of 18 inches, and in front by a wooden inclosure with doors and windows in it, and that the erection adjoined to the gardens of other premises on each side, and to a brickfield not in the occupation of Mr. Slous at the back, but that there was no building within 60 feet from it. Mr. Slous contended, that having removed the slating off the roof he had rendered the erection conformable to law, *the inclosures being now merely wooden fences, and not inclosures to any building*; and, further, that being himself only a tenant-at-will, and his neighbours on each side being also tenants-at-will under the same freeholder, who was also the leaseholder of the ground adjoining at the back, the erection in question, if it should be deemed to be a building, was insulated within the meaning of the Act.

The Official Referees awarded as follows:—

"That notwithstanding the removal of the slating, the erection in question is a building within the meaning of the Metropolitan Buildings Act, and that inasmuch as the said building stands adjoining to ground in other occupation on three sides thereof, the same is not insulated within the meaning of the said first-mentioned Act; and that the said building not being inclosed with the materials by the said Act directed to be used for building external walls and party walls, and not having footings as required by the said Act, is contrary thereto, and we do hereby direct the said Thomas Davis Slous forthwith to remove the same."

Costs of the office, 1*l.* 8*s.* 6*d.*, and 1*l.* 1*s.* to the district-surveyor, to be paid by Mr. Slous.

*** We have received a letter on this matter stating, that in removing the slates, Mr. Slous thought he was fully complying with the surveyor's request. The letter continues,—"The charge brought by the district-surveyor when before the referees was, that the part added to the fence ought to be removed as well as the slates; he also contended that the front, being formed with doors and glass, could not be considered a fence, and he was justified in taking the whole into the account, as forming a building. Mr. S., in reply, contended that the Act did not prevent him from raising the fence. (This point was admitted by the Official Referees.) Mr. S. also contended the front was no more than a cross fence, although it was formed with doors and glass, there being no roof, and by retaining it he did not infringe upon the law. He would ask, could not he have a fence with a plain surface, and call in an artist to sketch on the face of it a similar front to that just removed, or any other picture the pencil could shadow forth. This point was also admitted; and yet, in the face of these plain facts, they think proper to condemn the whole as a building, because it is an inclosure; they might as well say the garden is a building because it is inclosed with a fence."

STEAM PIPES.

An information was laid by the district surveyor for the western part of London against Mr. J. Fraser, of Commercial-road East, to the effect that, no notice having been given as required by the Act, he had fixed steam pipes on the inside of his premises nearer than 14 inches to combustible material, contrary to the provisions of Schedule F and section 5 of the Act.

At a hearing, it appeared that the steam-pipes in question were used for warming a leather-dresser's factory, and for drying leather in course of preparation, for which purpose the heat must not exceed 60 deg. or 70 deg., or the goods would be damaged, and was not for the purpose of the manufacture of japanned leather; that the pipes were 4 inches in diameter, and not inclosed, but laid along over the floors, and from 9 to 4 inches distant from it, and supported by iron blocks raised with wood; that they were supplied from a low-pressure boiler, with which no machinery is connected, but which will stand a pressure of about 30 lbs.; and Mr. Fraser contended that, under these circumstances, the pipes did not come within the Act, and that no notice to the district-surveyor was necessary in respect thereof.

The referees awarded, that "Notwithstanding the low temperature at which the steam-pipes in question are intended to be used, the rule in Schedule F of the Act, as to any metal or other pipe or funnel for conveying smoke, heated air, or steam, does apply to the said steam-pipes, and that notice to the district surveyor ought to have been given by the said John Fraser in respect of the fixing thereof, in accordance with the provisions of the said Act

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